

C. Remarks

The claims are 1-3, with claim 1 being the sole independent claim. Claim 1 has been amended to better define the present invention. Support for this amendment may be found, for example, in the substitute specification at page 14, line 18, to page 15, line 5. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of the claims is expressly requested.

The Advisory Action mailed October 15, 2008 indicates that claims 1-3 still remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly obvious from U.S. Patent No. 4,825,249 (Oki) in view of U.S. Patent Nos. 3,024,209 (Ferrigno) and 3,387,071 (Cahill).

Applicants continue to disagree with the Examiner. However, to expedite prosecution, claim 1 has now been amended to specify that the urethane resin that forms the blade is allowed to react with the isocyanate compound to form a cured layer formed chiefly of allophanate linkages. Neither of cited references discloses this feature.

While Oki generally mentions allophanate bonds at column 2, lines 15-23, it fails to disclose to disclose or suggest that the cured layer is formed primarily of such linkages. In Ferrigno, a reaction for forming a urea resin is utilized to foam, whereas in the present invention, a reaction is utilized for forming allophanate linkages, and the formation of a urea resin is reduced as much as possible (page 19, lines 13-24; and page 21, line 24, through page 22, line 7).

Thus, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the arguments present in the Response filed September 9, 2008 in view of above amendment and comments. Furthermore, Applicants would like to again stress that the moisture content of an additive pigment as shown in Ferrigno would not suggest to one skilled in the

art that urethane resin in Oki should have the same moisture content or the moisture content as claimed, i.e., the criticality of a water content of 1% by weight or less in the process of forming a blade cannot be obtained based on a substantially different process disclosed in Ferrigno. Thus, since the criticality of this water content is demonstrated by the data presented in the subject application in Example 1 and Comparative Example 1, this data clearly rebuts any presumption that it would have been obvious to carry out the drying step in Oki to limit the moisture content as claimed.

In conclusion, Applicants respectfully submit that whether considered separately or in any combination, the documents of record fail to disclose or suggest the presently claimed elements. Wherefore, withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and passage of the application to issue are respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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